



2020 Hampton Street · Room 3063A Columbia, SC 29204
4th Floor Conference Room
(803) 576-2083
Minutes
October 16, 2023

Attendance

Commissioner	District	Present
Charles Weber	1	Yes
James Young	2	Yes
Wayman Stover	3	Yes
Glenice Pearson	4	Yes
Kip Dillihay	5	Yes
John Grego	6	Yes
Robert Squirewell	7	Yes
Deborah DePaoli	8	Yes
Khali Gallman	9	Yes
Darrell Jackson Jr.	10	No
Gail Rodriguez	11	Yes

Staff & Visitors	Affiliation
John McKenzie	Conservation Division
Val Morris	Conservation Division
Quinton Epps	Conservation Division
Aric Jensen	Assistant County Administrator

Call to Order

Grego welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order with a quorum at 3:30pm. Members, staff, and guests met in-person or by Zoom.

Approval of Agenda

- ⇒ **Weber moved to amend the agenda to modify Columbia Rowing Club Operating Agreement from an update to an action item which was seconded by Stover. Motion passed unanimously.**

Approval of Minutes

- ⇒ **Rodriguez moved to approve September minutes with minor modifications recommended by Grego which was seconded by Weber. Motion passed unanimously.**

Report of the Chair

- **Congaree Biosphere Region (CBR) – update:** Grego reported due to time constraints and some logistical issues, they did not pursue the grants being offered through the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) for Bates Old River boat ramp and the Wayfinding project.

- **Columbia Rowing Club Operating Agreement – action item:** Grego reported Epps was able to work with Richland County attorneys to have the CRC agreement approved with some modifications from past agreements.
 - **Weber moved to approve the accepted proposal as written by Richland County attorneys for CRCOA which was seconded by Young. Pearson abstained from the vote. Motion passed.**
- **Advocacy – update:** Young reported he and Epps met with Councilman Pugh and Young was officially appointed commissioner for District 2. Young suggested having talking points for the Commissioners to discuss with their council members the details of the comment letter to the Army Corps of Engineers (ACE). Grego stated he would compose those points and McKenzie would distribute the information to the other Commissioners.

Report from Community Planning & Development

- **Land Development Code-Remapping Restart – update:** Jensen reported the zoning map was approved and County Council will have another work session on October 24, 2023. On November 7 there will be a public hearing and the 2nd reading. If there aren't any changes, the text amendments could be adopted on November 14, 2023.

Treasurer's Report

- **FY22–23 General Budget status – update:** Epps reported no major changes since the last meeting.

Historic Preservation Committee (HPC) Report

- **Heritage Tourism Marketing Plan (HTMP) – update:** Gallman reported Robin Waites with Historic Columbia is ready to present a draft of the HTMP to the Historic Preservation Committee at the end of the month.
- **Historic Preservation Plan (HPP) – update:** Gallman reported the Richland County Conservation Commission (RCCC) staff has been researching different preservation plans in different areas to complete a comparable plan.
- **St. Peters Baptist Church Cemetery (8909 Wilson Blvd) – update:** Gallman reported the property is still listed for sale, the realtor has noted in the listing there is a cemetery on the property. Gallman mentioned the owner will place a fence outlining the area of the cemetery. McKenzie added he had a conversation with the Deputy Coroner and was informed the families who have loved ones placed in the cemetery are considering suing the property owner and the representative who sold the church property. He will share more details after a planned meeting with the parties and the Sheriff's Department.
- **Cemetery Protection Ordinance – update:** Gallman reported RCCC staff is currently researching the Charleston County cemetery protection ordinance as a benchmark to assess its

suitability for implementation in Richland County. McKenzie reported County attorney Chris Zeigler has started the draft for the cemetery protection ordinance.

Natural Resources Committee (NRC) Report

- **Lake Elizabeth Conservation Easement – update:** McKenzie reported this is a work in progress and haven't received any updates from Legal.
- **Scout Motor – update:** Grego reported he along with several others commissioners and Richland County staff met with Chad Johnston, attorney with Burr and Forman LLP, and Jeff Ruble, Director of Economic Development, Richland County where they discussed mitigations sites, wetlands and streams.
- **Potential Property Purchase – update:** Epps reported no changes since the last meeting and negotiations are still in progress.
- **Mill Creek Bridge – update:** Epps reported solicitation for the repair of the bridge is in process and he has already shown one contractor the bridge.
- **Bates Old River – update:** Grego reported on having a meeting with the Richland County Recreation Commission (RCRC) tomorrow to discuss their roles in active and passive landing projects.
- **Mitigation Bank Credits – update:** Epps reported there has not been much change since the last meeting, he received a check for a significant amount and deposited the check. In addition, there is a credit sale for 4.11 credits in Chester County.
- **Forestry Stewardship Plan – update:** Epps reported no new updates. Work in progress.

Conservation Program Analyst's Report

- **Benedict College Grant – update:** McKenzie reported Benedict College has responded back to his messages and phone calls. Benedict reported the tiles for the roof are on backorder and they have promised to give monthly updates on the roof project. He also informed the group of the Hyatt Park Kiosk progress and eventual reveal ceremony.
- **FY 23-24 RCCC Grants – update:** McKenzie reported all of the grants are on track and he has received photos and videos from the Coaching Project grant recipients.
- **Events – update:** Harbison State Forest has invited RCCC to celebrate the completion of their pole barn and saw mill on or around October 24, 2023. Morris reported there was still time to register for the 2nd Annual Preserving Historic Cemetery Workshop which is being held at SC Achieves and History Center, September 21, 2023. She also reported RCCC Holiday Drop-In is scheduled for Tuesday, December 12, 2023. Lastly, it was reported McKenzie will be at Soda City on Saturday, November 18, 2023 to promote the grants program. He encouraged everyone who could attend to volunteer and spread the word about the grants.

Conservation Manager's Report

- **Staff vacancies – update:** Epps reported there was a candidate selected for the Land Planner position, however the candidate declined the offer.

New Business: None

Public Input: None

⇒ **At 4:32 pm, Weber moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Squirewell. Motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,
Val Morris